

1608/3254

A

# LETTER

To the Right Honourable the  
**LORD-MAYOR,**

The Worshipful the  
**ALDERMEN,**  
THE  
**RECORDER,**

And the rest of the  
**GENTLEMEN of the COMMITTEE,**

Appointed for the  
**Rebuilding of the Jail of NEWGATE.**

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From Sir **STEPHEN THEODORE JANSSEN, Bart.**  
Chamberlain of the City of LONDON.

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With an **APPENDIX.**

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**LONDON:**

Printed in the Year M DCC LXVII.

THE

LORD-MAYOR

ALFRED



RECORDS

168/8091



GENERAL

Appointed for the

Rebuilding of the Jail of Newgate.

From Sir Stephen Treadwell, Treasurer, Bank.

Chamberlain of the City of London.

With an APPENDIX.

LONDON:

Printed by the Yearly Bazaar.



A  
L E T T E R, &c.

*My Lord and Gentlemen,*

**A**S you are appointed a Committee by the Corporation of the City of *London*, for directing the Rebuilding the Jail of *Newgate* (that abominable Sink of Beastliness and Corruption) I might be judged inexcusable, did I not lay before you the whole of the Informations, which came to my Knowledge, as being one of the Sheriffs of *London* in the Year 1750, when the *Newgate* Contagion made such dreadful Havock in the *Old Baily* Sessions-House, and when not only the immediate Duty of my Office, but the Ties of Humanity, called upon

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me to exert myself, in order to prevent, as far as lay in my Power, the like calamitous Disorder from doing any further Mischief.

The Lord-Mayor, all the Judges, and the whole Court of Aldermen, were, however, thoroughly perswaded, notwithstanding all the Precautions that could be taken, that there was no effectual Remedy, against so dreadful a Distemper, but that of building a new Jail.

It was for this Reason, that the old ruinous Buildings, between the *Old Bailey* Sessions-House and *Newgate*, belonging to the City, were suffered to fall in, and that a Plan for a new Jail became the general Topic, as well as the general Desire.

And if we consider the single Instance alone, of the noble and generous Grant of £100,000, for Relief of the Sufferers by the Earthquake at *Lisbon*, no one will entertain

entertain a Doubt, in case an Application had been made the ensuing Session, while the Terrors from the Jail Distemper were still fresh in People's Minds, but the Parliament would have granted liberally, towards rooting out so ignominious, and so dangerous a Nuisance, from the very Heart of the first City in *Europe*, whereby the whole Kingdom was in some Degree liable to be affected.

The universal Disposition for having a new Jail, upon an unexceptionable Plan, induced me to write, in *May* 1750, to *William Thornton*, Esq; one of the then Representatives for the City of *York*, requesting of him, that he would be pleased to give Directions for a Plan to be taken of *York Castle*, or *County Jail*, which was forthwith complied with, as will be seen by Mr. *Stabler's* Letter (in the Appendix, No. 2) dated so early as the 23d of *July* following, whereby he sends me four Sheets, most accurately drawn, comprehending all that could be desired on that

Head :



Head: For when they were produced to the Lord-Mayor, the Judges, the Aldermen, and many other Persons of Note, they were unanimously of Opinion, there could be no Model for a new Jail, more proper to be adopted than that of *York Castle*. And I am perswaded, that Mr. *Dance*, the City's Surveyor, who had these four Sheets for some Time in his Hands, will very frankly own, that the Plan he drew and printed, by Order of the *Newgate* Committee in 1755, was in a great Measure taken from the *York* Plan, rightly judging, that in taking that for his Guide, his Performance could not well fail of meeting with the general Approbation.

When the Committee shall have examined and considered the *York Plan*, which I have by me at their Command, they will find, that the whole Space of Ground, which passes under the Denomination of *York Castle*, or the *County Jail*, to be no less than Two Acres and One Rood; with Water in great Plenty,  
and

and all other Conveniencies; and I am well informed, the Number of Felons and Debtors confined there, seldom exceed one Hundred, or one Hundred and twenty at the most, at one and the same Time, whereby they are almost certain of being preserved in a healthy State at all Times.

Whereas, what shall we say to the contracted Spot which has been hitherto thought of for the rebuilding the Jail of *Newgate*, not exceeding in the Whole, Three Quarters of an Acre; comprehending the *Old Bailey* Sessions-House, with the Garden and Yard belonging to it; and yet 300 Prisoners may be expected to be lodged therein, at one and the same Time, as has often been the Case, many of whom are the most profligate Wretches, who are too often afflicted with malignant Diseases before they are brought thither?

The Committee will therefore most probably appropriate towards this salutary Undertaking,

Undertaking, not only all the Ground the City is already possessed of, but likewise as much more, as they are impowered by Act of Parliament to avail themselves of: And, if after all, the whole Space should not prove amply sufficient, whereon to erect the County Jail, in every Respect commodious, healthy, and secure, and not unbecoming the Magnificence of the Metropolis of the Kingdom, Can it be doubted, but the Parliament will comply with any reasonable Application from the City of *London*, to enable them to accomplish so desirable a Work, upon a Plan as extensive as shall be judged necessary, for a Purpose so strongly dictated by common Humanity and Self-Preservation?

The extraordinary Expence, over and above the Fifty Thousand Pounds allotted by Parliament for this Building, if that Sum should happen to prove insufficient, may indeed be urged against so extensive a Design as the Importance of the Cause seems



seems to require; But it is to be hoped, no narrow Consideration will take Place, where the Security of the most notorious Offenders is concerned, and what is of much greater Consequence, the guarding against an Infection, which in the Heart of so great and populous a City, might endanger the Lives of Thousands of His Majesty's valuable Subjects.

And here I must desire Leave to observe, the Necessity there will be of leaving a competent Space between the Prison Walls, and all other Buildings adjacent thereto; for out of all the numerous Escapes which have been made out of *Newgate*, within my Memory, I can recollect but two Instances, except in Disguise, that were not effected by the too close Contiguity of the other Buildings to the Jail.

As the Committee will of course have the several Reports read to them, which have from Time to Time been made by

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the standing *Newgate* Committee, to the Courts of Common-Council, for many Years past, and as they will undoubtedly have several rebuilding Plans laid before them, for their Consideration; if they can gather any additional new Lights from this small Collection, with which I do myself the Honour to present them, I shall esteem myself particularly happy in being the Instrument of conveying it to their Hands. — However that may be, I am fully perswaded they will exert the Power, they are upon this important Occasion vested with, to the entire Satisfaction, not only of their Fellow-Citizens in particular, but to that of the Public in general. I am,

With great Respect,

*My Lord and Gentlemen,*

*Your most obliged, and*

*Most obedient humble Servant,*

Steph. Theo. Janssen,  
Chamberlain of the City of London.

*Guildhall, 1 Oct. 1767.*

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Most of the Originals of these Papers, are in the Hands of *Stephen Theodore Janssen*.

A P P E N -

## APPENDIX.

## Number I.

Brief Heads of a Proposal for preventing the fatal Consequences arising from an Epidemical Distemper, which frequently prevails amongst the Prisoners in *Newgate*.

**T**HE miserable Objects confined in this unhealthy Place, whether for trespassing the Laws, or for Debt, are so numerous, and so ill accommodated, that it is a thing scarce possible to prevent their imbibing and retaining a common Disease always adherent to People in such a Situation, who are close shut up in Filth of divers Kinds, and at the same Time deprived of the Benefit of the Air, which of Course must render their own Days miserable beyond Expression, and very often draws fatal Consequences along with it to others, whereof we have lately seen a most melancholy and dreadful Example; not only from the Bench, but from



from many indifferent Persons, who attended the Trials at the *Old Baily*.

To Remedy this Evil for the future, it is proposed :

I. That as all the Houses from *Newgate* to the *Old Baily* are the Property of the City of *London*, an exact Survey be taken of the Extent of that Ground, wherein the Space which the present Jail takes up, must be comprehended.

II. That whereas this Ground will afford Room sufficient for building a new and commodious Jail, the same may without Difficulty be contrived so, as that the Felons and Debtors can be kept separate, which Regulation alone will prove of no small Advantage to our intended Plan.

III. That, without descending to Particulars, this Building be composed of the Jail

Jail itself, a House for the Keeper, and a large Yard, such as is to be seen at *York*.

IV. That for the better Security of the Prisoners, the Windows be double barred, the Inward with Iron, and the Outward with Oak Shutters, or Lattices full of Iron Nails.

V. That the Walls, quite round, be made strong and high, and that a thin slit Deal be placed Edgeways along the Top of them, which upon being pressed with any Weight, will give Way, and prove a Means to discover Persons attempting an Escape.

Lastly, If the Method thus laid down shall in general be approved of, there are many other necessary Arrangements, Rules and Orders, to be enforced and observed, towards rendering the Place in Question as healthful as possible; and as Water may be had in Plenty, this, according to the Practice in *Holland*, can be

be done sufficiently to answer the End proposed, of preventing infectious Distempers from reigning in that Jail.

Dated this 24th of March, 1750.

M. O'Connor.

To Alderman Janssen, Sheriff of London.

Number II.

York, July 23, 1750.

To Alderman Janssen, Sheriff of London.

Honoured Sir,

**P**URSUANT to your Request to Mr. Thornton, to get exact Plans, &c. of York County Jail, he wrote to me to employ a proper Person in this City (sending at the same Time a Copy of your Letter for Instructions) to draw them; accordingly, I employed one *Wilkinson*, who has taken an infinite deal of Care in the Performance, and Accuracy, having been closely employed five Weeks in the Survey and Drawing them; as Mr. Thornton

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was



was going upon the Moors upon a Party of Pleasure, he desir'd me to send the Plans to you as soon as finish'd, which I have done by Mr. *Robert Siddall*, Woollen Draper in *Cheapside*, who is so kind as to take them in a Coach, in which he sets out for *London* To-morrow. The Man who drew them leaves it entirely to your Generosity what your Honour pleases to order him, he being ignorant of the Prices usually paid upon those Occasions, and acquiring the Art upon his own Ingenuity and Industry; but upon the Examination of Gentlemen in this City, who are very well acquainted with the Conveniences of our County Jail, they are thought to be very exactly drawn, and they heartily wish the Honourable City of *London* would take a Plan from these Draughts, which would very much redound to the Honour and Credit of this County. Whatever Gratuity you think proper the Draftsman should have for his Trouble, I should take it as a particular Favour,

Favour, if you'd pay it to Mr. *James Hodges* upon *London-Bridge*, which will oblige

*Your Honour's most humble Servant*  
to Command,

Samuel Stabler,

Bookseller in *York*.

The Drawings consist of

On Vellum. Elevation and Plans of *York*  
Castle or County Jail.

On Paper, No. 1. Plans and Elevations of  
Court Houses, Grand  
Jury House, Infirmary, &c.

No. 2, Perspective View of the  
Castle of *York*.

No. 3, Plan or Area of the  
whole Buildings and  
Extent of Ground,  
containing two Acres  
and one Rood.

Number III.

A Propofal for rendering His Majesty's Jail of *Newgate* in the City of *London*, more commodious, and for keeping the Prifoners more airy and clean.

I. **T**HAT the common Prifon, the feperate Rooms, and Cells, be wafhed clean once a Week, and rubbed afterwards with Vinegar, or with Herbs, fuch as Rue, Sage, Penny-Royal mafhed in Water.

II. That no more than one Felon be put in one Cell, unlefs upon emergent Occafions, where the Number of Felons exceed the Number of Cells, and then but two to be put in one Cell at the fame Time; that fuch Cell fhall be clean'd, as above, twice in each Week, during the Time two fhall remain therein.

III. That there be, by the City, a certain Number of Shirts and Shifts provided, in Number about

of



of one Sort of the other. And that they be given to the Care of the Keeper or Turnkey, for which he is to be answerable, in order to supply such Prisoner or Prisoners as shall be destitute of Change of Linen, and that such Prisoner be supplied by the Jailer, or during the Week his own be washed, and continue that Change once a Week, during their Stay in the said Jail, and that on the Days of their respective Discharge or Execution, the Linen they respectively had at their Commitment be given back to them, and the Shirt or Shift belonging to the Prison, be given back to the Keeper or Turnkey, and that he omit securing the same at the Peril of his being charged with the Linen belonging to the said Jail, carried away by such Prisoner or Prisoners.

IV. That a Survey be taken of the Prison, to see if there may not be Air Pipes fixed in the Cells of the said Jail, without endangering the Safety of the Custody of the Felons therein confined.

V. That

V. That if the Boundaries of the said Jail, could, at a moderate Price or Expence, be enlarged, there would be no need of the Air Pipes aforesaid.

VI. That every Prisoner be, before he is brought into Court to be arraigned, well washed with Vinegar, or Water with some of the Herbs; and if his Cloaths, Cap or Wig be offensive, that there be cloaths and a few Caps provided ready to be put upon them, before they are brought into the Court.

To Alderman *Janssen*, Sheriff of *London*.

Number IV.

To *Stephen Theodore Janssen*, Esq; Alderman and Sheriff of *London*.

Received about *June*, 1750.

S I R,

**Y**OUR Answer when you were asked, Whether you were not afraid to go into the Prisons, to have them cleansed? Was, that it was your Business: This  
Answer

Answer makes me respect and admire you, as well as several others to whom I have told it. — I submit it to you, Sir, whether the preventing all the Stench that attends the Drunkenness so frequent in those Places, be not much preferable to the Removal of it, if it were possible to put the Prisoners upon Bread and Water? You easily see the Consequences, the poor unhappy People would be more afraid of it than they commonly are, of all the Punishments that attend them; the Filth of those Places would not be so great, or so fatal as it has lately been, and the great Infamy of living and dying drunk would be removed: You see all the good Consequences: But I fear the Difficulties that arise in this Town, even from a Jailor's Profits, may get the better of your best Intentions. Occasions are often wanting to Men, and Men to Occasions; both seem to concur at this Time; People are frightened at the least Accident, and you are the only Person whose Spirit and present Employment  
make



make you inclined, and I hope capable of such an Attempt. — Unknown as I am to you, you will believe that nothing but Wishes for an abandoned Public, and Esteem for your uncommon Character, would make me give you or myself this Trouble. I am,

S I R,

*Your most obedient humble Servant.*

Number V.

To *Stephen Theodore Janssen*, in *St. Paul's Church-yard*.

Received in the Summer of 1750.

Humble Proposals.

**T**HAT an Act of Parliament be procured to make *St. John's Gate*, or any other Gate, a Prison for Debtors, in the County of *Middlesex*, which will enlarge *Newgate* for the Felons.

*Vide* the Act of *Charles II.* to separate Debtors from Felons.

That

That there be Ventilators in *Newgate*,  
to circulate the Air.

Please to read Mr. *Stibbs's* Adverti-  
sement in the *Daily Advertiser* of the  
25th of *May*, 1750.

That the Sheriffs of *London* do provide  
two course Shirts for each Felon, and  
that they be allowed a clean Shirt twice  
a Week.

That a proper Person be appointed to  
inspect and keep the Prisoners clean, as  
is done to Patients in the Hospitals.

*N. B.* The great Yard, with several  
Houses at *Dorset-stairs*, is to be lett by  
his Grace the Duke of *Dorset*, for 300*l.*  
and 1000*l.* Fine, which might be made a  
commodious Place for the Lord-Mayor,  
&c. to take Water or Land, and lengthen  
the Procession, there being Space enough  
for a great Number of Coaches.

Number VI.

*Teddington, 11 July, 1751.*

To Mr. Alderman *Janssen*.

S I R,

NOT having Time, when I was with you 'tother Day at *Richmond*, to talk to you fully of the Affair I came about, I shall do it fully in this Letter, viz.

Last Year, when many died of the pestilential infectious Jail Distemper, which they got in the *Old Bailey Court*, there was, on that Occasion, a Probability, that large Ventilators would be fixed in *Newgate*, to be worked by a Windmill, as you saw was done on board a *Man of War* at *Deptford*, which would effectually preserve all the Wards in *Newgate* in a sweet healthy State.

I then wrote an Account of this Design to *Monf. Du Hamel* at *Paris*, who is Inspector



spector of all the Ports in *France*, and at the same Time, proposed to him to make Use of the same Method to preserve great Quantities of Corn in Granaries, by the same Means. — He was so pleased with the Proposal, that he immediately fixed a Windmill, on a great Public Granary at *Paris*, which by working large Ventilators, blows Plenty of fresh Air upwards through the Corn, which so effectually preserves the Corn, that it is like to become a National Practice; of which he has sent me a particular Account, with Drafts describing how it is done. I have written him Word, that where it can be had, a Water-Mill will do much better.

I have not yet given the *French* a particular Account, of what I have done on board the *Sheerness Man of War*, towards preserving the Timbers of Ships layed up in ordinary, because I was desirous we should have the Credit of first doing the Thing. But as the Commissioners of the

Navy, to avoid a trifling Expence, (which would most assuredly save Millions to the Nation) have put a Stop to my Proceedings, when I was got only to the Threshold of the Experimental Research, and had as yet tried only the fourteenth Part of the Air that would convey it among the Timbers of a Ship: For in new Researches we are under a Necessity of feeling out our Way Step by Step. — Since I am thus stopt short in this important Research, I intend, before *Christmas*, to publish the second Volume of my Book upon Ventilators, in which, among other things, both in Justice to the Public, and in Vindication of the Reasonableness of my Proposal, I will give a full Account of it, and of the high Probability, I will say Certainty of Success, in preserving the Timber of Ships many Years the longer from decaying.

This will probably put the *French* upon doing the thing, and then we shall have the Disgrace of copying after them, which  
we

we must now do, if we should ever attempt it, to preserve Corn in Granaries, as Monf. *Du Hamel* has done.

I am sensible that the Deliberations, whether *Newgate* should be pulled down and new built, have with good Reason delayed the fixing of Ventilators there. — But if it is, or shall soon be resolved, that *Newgate* shall not be pulled down; then, I could wish, if it is at all to be done, that it might be done before the next Winter; that I may be enabled to give an Account of its being done, in my second Volume; else we may stand a fair Chance to learn that of the *French* too.

I am the more desirous to have it done in *Newgate*, not only for the Sake of the Prisoners there, but also as a laudable Pattern, not only for the rest of the Nation, but for the Benefit of the World.

Of what Importance will this be to the Nation, when we engage in War, to  
have



have our brave undaunted Sailors and Soldiers, when Prisoners of War, preserved from being poisoned and rotting in Jails? For it is highly probable, that three in four of those who die in War, loose their Lives by the Stench of Jails, and Hospitals.

I have several Years since wrote to Mons. *Du Hamel*, to propose the Ventilating the Prisons of Prisoners of War, and if the Example was set at *Newgate*, the good Effect of it would probably induce the several warring Nations, on both Sides, to do so great an Act of Humanity.

Thus you see, Sir, that what I am so desirous of having done in *Newgate*, is an Affair of the greatest Importance, not only to this Nation, but to the whole World.

I am therefore perswaded, that the opulent and renowned City of *London* will not long hesitate about it.

When

When you and several other Aldermen, with Dr. *Pringle* and myself, went in *October* last into *Newgate*, we were but too sensible of the Stench of several of the principal Wards, a Stench so very offensive, that it would be a great Act of Humanity to deliver, not only unhappy Debtors, but even the vilest of Criminals from it; even though it occasioned neither the Sickneſs nor the Death of any. But when, withal, we are assured, it cauſes the Sickneſs and Death of many, can any one hesitate, whether an effectual Means shall be made use of to cure so destructive a Pest? I am,

S. I. R,

Your obliged humble Servant,

Stephen Hales.

Number

## Number VII.

To Mr. Alderman *Janssen*.*Teddington, 10 June, 1752.**Dear Sir,*

**H**Appening Yesterday to be in Town,  
I found your's at my Lodging, but  
please to direct to me here, till the Prin-  
cess returns to reside at *Leicester-House*.

It will be absolutely necessary to have  
a Man to furl and unfurl the Sails of the  
Mill, as Occasion shall require ; and also  
to open and shut the sliding Shutters of  
the several Trunks, daily, that all the  
foul Wards may be refreshed in their  
Turns. It is probable that about eight  
or ten Wards may be aired at a Time.  
I was at *London* Yesterday, purposely to  
view the Ventilators and Windmill at  
*Newgate*, in order to give a written Re-  
port to the Lord-Mayor and Aldermen,  
one of which is sent to the Lord-Mayor  
and two Sheriffs, and one I have here  
inclosed



inclosed for your Perusal. It was great Pleasure to me, Dr. *Pringle* and Dr. *Knight*, two Physicians, to see the Ventilators worked by a Windmill, drawing, like large heavy Lungs, at the Rate of 7000 Tuns of foul Air *per* Hour, out of several Wards at the same Time, which were thereby sensibly sweetened, to the great Comfort of the Prisoners, who informed us with Pleasure, that they thereby enjoyed much the better Health. I think it will be very requisite to have the Mill go as much as it can every Day: And even in Winter to change the Air daily to such a Degree, as it shall be found the Prisoners can bear without Inconvenience. For foul Air long confined, will putrify in Winter, though not so soon as in Summer. There are some Rooms that have little Passage for Air to pass in or out, which ought more especially to be daily ventilated.

If it shall be thought proper, to make it the Business of him who has the Care

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of

of the Mill, to clear the Wards frequently, by scraping and sweeping, it would contribute to the Healthiness of the Prison.

I make no Doubt but the happy Event will shew the Reasonableness of this humane, laudable Example of the City of *London*; and it will be a great Pleasure to me, to have been in any Degree serviceable, in doing them so acceptable a Service. I am,

S I R,

*Your obliged humble Servant,*

Stephen Hales.

P. S. I believe that if the Millwright is obliged, to oil and maintain the Mill for three Years, according to his Agreement, that he will be a Looser by it; for Mr. *Yeoman*, who has made the Mill for the *Sheerneys Man of War*, told me lately, seriously, that it had cost him above Fifty Pounds, for which he has agreed to make it.

Number

## Number VIII.

The following Account is what Dr. *Hales* alludes to in the foregoing Letter, Number VII. for the Perusal of Mr. Alderman *Janssen*, viz.

1752. An Account of the Ventilators and Windmill, which are fixed in *Newgate*, by Order of the Lord-Mayor, Sheriffs and Aldermen of *London*.

By Dr. *Hales*.

AS the Committee of Aldermen had ordered the Ventilators to be fixed in *Newgate*, under my Direction; when finished, I went into *Newgate* to examine them, and to consult about adjusting the due Degree of opening, with sliding Shutters, the Mouths of the several branching Trunks, which go to each Ward, so as many Wards may receive the Benefit of Ventilation at the same Time; so I thought it incumbent on me to make a Report thereof.



I find the Ventilators well made, and fixed with their branching Trunks in a proper Manner, so as to ventilate in their Turns, all the Wards, when needful, and full of Prisoners, but principally the great and foulest Wards, and those in which there are many Prisoners.

As the Ventilators draw out of the several Wards, which are in a State of Ventilating, at the Rate of 7000 Tuns of Air *per* Hour, so by thus frequently changing the foul Air in Prisons, it will not have Time to stagnate long enough to putrify, which requires many Days: And it is this Putrefaction, which by being the most subtile Dissolvent in Nature, dissolves the Blood and Humours of our Bodies, and thereby produces the infectious pestilent Disease, which is called the Jail Distemper; and it is by the same subtile dissolving Power, that close confined damp Air, rots even the hardest Heart of Oak, as is evident in innumerable Instances.

We

We may therefore, upon good and reasonable Grounds, be well assured, of a very sensible good Effect, in preserving the Health and Lives of Multitudes of Prisoners, in Prisons that are thus ventilated.

And I make no Doubt but this humane and laudable Example of the City of *London*, will be followed not only in many other Jails in this Kingdom, but also by other Nations: In Order, to the promoting of which, I have published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for *April*, an Account and particular Description, of the Manner how all the Wards in *Newgate*, are ventilated with fresh Air.

I have, at the Duke *De Noailles's* Desire, sent one of these Magazines to him, he intending, as far as in him lays, to have the like done in *France*, in the Jails, and *Hôtel Dieu*, a very foul Hospital. I have also sent a Magazine to an ingenious Correspondent at *Naples*, and to some Gentlemen of *Saxe Gotha*, who were lately

lately with me, who intend also to promote the Use of them.

I cannot forbear heartily to recommend Cleanliness and clean Straw, which greatly contribute to Health: This is what the Master of the *Savoy* Prison takes great Care to have effectually done, notwithstanding there are Ventilators, which ventilate five of the principal Wards.

*Qu.* May not the Person who has the Care of the Mill, and also of regulating the sliding Shutters, so as duly to ventilate all the Wards; may it not also be the Business of this Person, to keep the Wards clean, by scraping, sweeping, &c.?

At the *Savoy*, the Walls of the Wards were Whitewashed, when the Ventilators were fixed. This Whitewashing may contribute not only to make the Rooms less gloomy and dark, but also to cure in some Measure, the nasty infectious Matter which



which has for many Years been settling, from a foul putrid Air, on the Walls.

As to the Cells, they might I believe, if need required, be all ventilated in their Turns, by a very small cheap single Ventilator, fixed to the Ceiling of the common Passage to all their Doors, and worked by a Pendulum Handle, like a Pump.

But I apprehend, if they are kept very clean, and have once after every Sessions, an Ounce or two of Brimstone burnt, by laying a red hot Piece of Iron on it, in a little Pot of Sand or Earth, it may suffice. These acid Fumes of burning Brimstone, are efficacious to cure the putrid Infection that adheres to the Walls: But as there is no thorough Passage for the Air through these Cells, I guess it will be more adviseable to scrape and sweep than to wash them, unless it be in a very dry State of Air in Summer, or in a long Continuance of dry North Easterly Winds  
in

in Winter. For damp close confined Air is very unwholesome, as has been found by Experience; when in warm Climates, they have towards Evening, washed Ships, in hopes to make them cool in the Night between Decks; which on the contrary, caused much Sickness. If a Hole, about nine Inches square, were cut in each Cell-Door, with Graing Iron Bars across, it would a little contribute to a Draft of Air.

It were much to be wished, when the Prisoners from other unventilated Prisons, are brought to *Newgate*, at each Sessions, that they were kept in separate Wards, so as not to endanger the infecting the *Newgate* Prisoners, with the Jail Distemper, which they often bring with them. This is what once happened at *Winchester* Jail, where two infected Prisoners, were brought thither from *Reading* Jail, which caused the Sickness and Death of many. For though Ventilators will effectually pre-

prevent the fresh breeding of the Jail Distemper, yet it will not easily cure it.

As to the Windmill, it is a very good one, and so compleatly well made, with strong Iron Braces, and Brass Friction Wheels, or Castors, for the Frame to turn round on an Iron Plate, so as the more readily and easily to turn and face the Wind; that the Millwright complains, that it will be too hard a Bargain for him, if he is obliged to stand to his Agreement, to maintain and oil the Mill for three Years: He humbly prays therefore, that he may be released from that Part of his Agreement.

And I am of Opinion, that it would be a very hard Bargain, to oil and keep it in Repair for three Years, for Fifty Guineas; for another Millwright asked me Fifty-nine Pounds, for a Mill, not so good as this by Ten Pounds in Value, for which I make no Doubt, he would have asked Seventy Pounds.



It was absolutely necessary to fix a Scaffold round the Mill, in order for a Man to stand upon, to furl or unfurl the Sails; this, the Millwright says, was not included in the Agreement to make the Mill for Fifty Guineas.

And whereas the Prisoners complain, that many of their Chimnies smoak the Rooms much; this Inconvenience may probably be effectually remedied, by narrowing each Chimney to about fourteen or sixteen Inches wide every way, not only by way of Drawstove just near the Fire, but for about three Yards higher, which is found in many Hundreds of Instances, to cure most smoaking Chimnies, even those that have been over topped ten or fifteen Feet, by a higher Building, of which I know an Instance at Mr. *Vines's*, at *Whitton* in this Neighbourhood of *Teddington*.

Stephen Hales.

## Number IX.

To the Right Honourable *Stephen Theodore Janssen*, Lord-Mayor of the City of London.

*Pall-Mall, 15 Feb. 1755.*

*My Lord,*

I Had the Honour of your Lordship's Letter Yesterday, but I did not then answer it, as I took Time to recollect in what manner your Lordship communicated to me the Particulars relating to the Jail Distemper, that was so fatal to the Court at the *Old Bailey* in the Year 1750. I find no Notes on that Subject, but I have a pretty distinct Remembrance from your Lordship's Mouth, and which I published soon after in my Observations on the Diseases of the Army, where I quoted your Authority.

That Book, I have therefore sent to your Lordship, which indeed I ought to have sent sooner, but I hope you Lordship will pardon the Omission, and ac-

cept of it now, as a Present from the Author.

The Account of Jails begins Page 345, and your Lordship's Name is mentioned in a Note at the Bottom of Page 349. With Regard to the Number, I remember your Lordship's telling me, you believed there were above Fifty, who died in all, but that you had certain Accounts of a Number above Forty, and therefore it was that last Number I adopted, as it might appear not to be exaggerated.

Since that Time I have published nothing on the Jail Distemper, except an Account of the Sickness of seven Workmen, out of eleven, that were employed by Mr. *Stibbs*, Master Carpenter, for setting up the Ventilator in *Newgate*. This Paper, being read to the Royal Society, was only printed in the first Part of the Forty-eighth Volume, *viz.* the last Numbers that have been published of the *Transactions*.

In



In passing by *Newgate*, from Time to Time, I am sorry to see the Machine so often standing still, though there seemed to be Wind enough to turn the Sails. I doubt the Effect of that Contrivance is in a great Measure lost, by there being no Person appointed to keep it in Order, to regulate the Sliders, and to turn the Sails to the Wind, when the Wind is too weak to perform that Action itself. But the Truth is, I despair of getting thoroughly the better of the Distemper and Contagion, without building a larger Prison, better aired, and with a Court in the Middle, or a Yard adjoining to it, in which the Prisoners may from Time to Time, breathe the fresh Air. I am, with the greatest Regard,

*My Lord,*

*Your Lordship's*

*Most obedient humble Servant,*

*John Pringle.*

## Number X.

Copy of a Letter in the Gazetteer of  
Friday, January 13, 1764.

To the Printer.

**A**S an Account of the Jail Distemper at *Oxford* in the Year 1577, and at *London* in 1750, may not seem altogether unseasonable or useless at this Time, it is inclosed. The former is translated from *Campden*, the latter transcribed from *Foster*.

In the Year 1577, while the Judges were holding the Assizes at *Oxford*, and one *Rowland Jinks*, a libellous Bookseller, was trying for an Offence of that Nature against the Queen, most of those present were so seized with a poisonous and pestilential Infection, either from the Stench of the Prisoners, or from the Place, that within about forty Days, almost all, except Women and Children, died. Amongst them was *Robert Bellas*, Chief Baron of the *Exchequer*, a grave Man, and remarkable

able for his Knowledge in the Law ;  
*Robert D'Oily*, Sir *William Barblington*,  
 Knt. *D'Oily*, Shiriff of the County of  
*Oxford*, *Harcourt*, *Weneman*, *Pheteplace*,  
 Men illustrious in their Calling, *Barham*,  
 a famous Counsellor, almost all the Gen-  
 tlemen of the Jury, and about 300 others.  
*Camd. Eliz.* p. 271. *Gilpin's Life*, p. 140.

At the *Old Bailey* Sessions in *April*,  
 1750, one Mr. *Clarke* was brought to his  
 Trial, and it being a Case of great Ex-  
 pectation, the Court, and all the Passages  
 to it, were extremely crowded ; the Wea-  
 ther too, was hotter than is usual at that  
 Time of the Year.

Many People who were in Court at  
 this Time, were sensibly affected with a  
 very noisome Smell ; and it appeared soon  
 afterwards, upon Enquiry ordered by the  
 Court of Aldermen, that the whole Pri-  
 son of *Newgate*, and all Passages leading  
 thence into the Court, were in a very  
 filthy Condition, and had long been so.

What



What made the Circumstances to be at all attended to, was, that within a Week, or ten Days at most, after the Sessions, many People who were present at Mr. *Clarke's* Trial, were seized with a Fever of the malignant Kind, and few who were seized, recovered.

The Symptoms were much alike in all the Patients ; and in less than six Weeks Time the Distemper entirely ceased.

It was remarked by some ; and I mention it because the same Remark was made by *Campden* ; that *Women were very little affected*, I did not hear of more than one Woman who took the Fever in Court, though doubtless many Women were there.

It ought to be remembered, that at the Time this Distemper happened, there was no Sickness in the Jail more than is common in such Places ; this Circumstance, which distinguisheth this from  
most

most of the Cases of the like which we have heard of, suggesteth a very proper Caution, *not to presume too far upon the Health of the Jail, barely because the Jail Fever is not among the Prisoners.*

For, without Doubt, if the Points of Cleanliness and free Air have been greatly neglected, the putrid *Effluvia*, which the Prisoners bring with them in their Cloaths, &c. especially where too many are brought into a crowded Court together, may have fatal Effects upon People who are accustomed to breathe better Air; though the poor Wretches, who are in some Measure habituated to the Fumes of a Prison, may not always be sensible of any great Inconvenience from them.

The Persons of chief Note who were in Court at this Time, and died of the Fever, were Sir *Samuel Pennant*, Lord-Mayor for that Year; Sir *Thomas Abney*, one of the Justices of the Common Pleas, *Charles Clarke*, Esq; one of the Barons

of the Exchequer, and Sir *Daniel Lambert*, one of the Aldermen of *London*. Of less Note, a Gentleman of the Bar, two or three Students, one of the Under Sheriffs, an Officer of Lord Chief Justice *Lee*, who attended his Lordship in Court at that Time; several of the Jury on the *Middlesex* Side, and about forty other Persons, whom Business or Curiosity had brought thither. *Fost. Cr. Law*, p. 74, &c.

*An English Lawyer.*

*Jan.* 12, 1764.

# Number XI.

Copy of a Letter in the *Gazetteer* of *Friday, January* 13, 1764.

To the Citizens of *London*,

*London*, 13 *Jan.* 1764.

Without entering into the disagreeable Accounts lately inserted in the daily Papers, concerning the *Health* of the Prisoners in *Newgate*; and previous to the Public's reading the following Particulars; wherein



wherein their Preservation in common, and yours in particular is so much at Stake: You will please to reflect, whether in our Improvements within this great City, we have not begun, and are not proceeding, at the wrong End; And whether the *Jail of Newgate*, which is the greatest Nuisance and Eyesore in it, should not be the principal Object of our Attention? In order to render it secure, spacious, ornamental, and in particular, *healthy*; instead of being suffered any longer to continue insecure, straitened, abominably disfigured, filthy *even* in its outward Appearance, and notoriously beastly and *unhealthy* within.

The new Bridge at *Black-friars* is a very noble Undertaking, the Repairing of *London-Bridge* is another grand Work, the having pulled down the City Gates has given Air and Elegance to the Streets, and the other Improvements begun, advance the Dignity and Splendor of the City of *London*; but no one will presume

to say they are not much *eclipsed*, whilst so detestable a Nuisance as the *Jail* of *Newgate* still remains in the very Center of it.

I should be very sorry to be thought to insinuate, that any of the useful Works either begun or intended, should be laid aside, or *even* suspended, to make room for this so necessary an Amendment. The View of this Address being merely to inspire my Fellow-Citizens with a Resolution, for the Sake of their own *Healths*, and of the poor Wretches who are so unhappy as to be confined there, and for the Honour and Dignity of so opulent a City, to have this infamous Sink of Misery and Destruction torn up from its very Foundation, and in its stead another *Jail* built, which will answer the desirable Purposes of Security, Convenience, Ornament and *Health*.

Whoever remembers the Fatality which happened at the *Old Bailey*, in the *April* Sessions,

Sessions, 1750, from the infectious Disorder among the Prisoners brought down from *Newgate*, to take their Trials, whereby Forty-four Persons then in Court lost their Lives, (among whom were Sir *Samuel Pennant*, Lord-Mayor, Sir *Thomas Abney* and Baron *Clarke*, two of the Judges, Sir *Daniel Lambert*, one of the Aldermen, several Counsellors, one of the Under Sheriffs, and five of the *Middlesex* Jury) will readily allow that no Time should be lost, no Trouble or Expence spared, till so necessary and so salutary a Work, as the Rebuilding and Enlarging the Jail of *Newgate*, is set about and accomplished.

The Number tried that Sessions being remarkably great, and some of the Trials being interesting to the Public, (particularly the Trial of Capt. *Clarke*, for killing Capt. *Innes* in a Duel, in *Hyde Park*) the Court was unusually crowded, and became so hot, that it was necessary to let down the Right Hand Sash facing the Bench, through



through which it is presumed; the Wind being then brisk at North East, in a Line from *Newgate* to this opened Sash; the Stream of foul Air might be brought upon those unhappy Persons, who sat on the South and South West Parts of the Court, for it was there the greatest Part of the Mortality fell, it being observed, that not above four or five Persons who sat on the opposite Side of the Court, either caught the Infection or died of it.

*A Fellow Citizen.*

## Number XII.

Copy of a Letter in the *Gazetteer* of  
*Saturday, January 14, 1764.*

To the Citizens of *London.*

*London, January 14, 1764.*

**A**FTER so shocking an Event, no one will be surprized, that the Judges, the Jurymen, and others, who were to attend at the ensuing Sessions, should express

press their Fears at being exposed to such imminent Danger of losing their Lives. Alderman *Janssen* therefore, one of the then Sheriffs of *London*, thought it his indispensable Duty, at all Hazards, to remove these Apprehensions, as far as lay in his Power, and as the Nature of the Case would admit. He began, by going into and taking a View of that *dismal Jail* himself, and directed Mr. *Akerman* the then Keeper of it, to have it thoroughly cleansed; upon which Five Cart Loads of the most abominable Filth were carried out of it; but least the *Effluvia* of such putrid Matter should infect the Air, the Sheriff had it carried a considerable Distance from Town, and there buried ten Feet under Ground. He next consulted the late Dr. *Stephen Hales*; that excellent Pattern of Humanity; in Consequence of which, the following Steps were taken, successively. Orders were given that the Jail should be thoroughly washed with Vinegar, and likewise that the Prisoners, a Day or two before their  
being

being brought down to the *Old Bailey* to take their Trials, should undergo the same Operation, which was accordingly done. The *Old Bailey* Court, and the whole House from Top to Bottom, (to which nothing had been done in thirty Years before) were scraped, cleansed and well washed with Vinegar, and the worthy Doctor caused certain Herbs to be burnt in the Court for some Days before the next Sessions began, to prevent a Return of the like Calamity, as before, which he and the Sheriff daily saw executed. The Leads, close adjoining to and fronting the Court, were taken up, and a great Quantity of Filth carried away, which had been gathering there for many Years before; and the two Yards under these Leads, the one for the Reception of the Men, the other for the Women Prisoners, (until they are call'd forth to take their Trials) were perfectly well cleansed and purified with Vinegar. Whilst all this was carrying on, the Sheriff went to the Gate-House Prison, *Westminster*, which he found



found in a most noisome State, this Prison he also ordered to be thoroughly cleansed and washed with Vinegar, and the Prisoners likewise ; before they were removed to *Newgate* against the approaching Sessions : He also went into *New Prison* and *Clerkenwell Bridewell*, where the same Orders were carried into Execution ; although it must be owned, that those two Jails were in a very cleanly State, when compared with the two former. And lastly, this other very useful Precaution was then taken. — It had been always customary before, to arraign a matter of twenty Prisoners at a time, at the Trying Bar, which is near to the very Center of the *Old Bailey Court*, so that if there had been any infectious Disorder among them, the Court was in the greatest Danger of catching it. To evade this Danger, in some Measure, another Bar, purposely for the Arraignment of Prisoners, was fixed, within a Yard or two of the Door opening into the Court from the Leads ; and a strict Order given by the Court,

H

that

that for the future, the Prisoners should be arraigned at that Bar *only*, and that never more than *Nine* should be arraigned at one time, by which Means the *Effluvia*, (except in a strong North Wind which blows directly in at that Door) could not dilate itself so far into the Court as before, neither could the *Effluvia* from *Nine* Prisoners strike so dangerously as from *Twenty*.

*A Fellow-Citizen.*

### Number XIII.

Instances of the Fatality of the *Newgate* Jail Fever, collected by S. T. J.

THE following Instances may serve to confirm, how necessary it is, let the Expence be ever so great, to guard against a malignant Disorder happening any more in our *principal Jail of Newgate*; the Receptacle from all the other Jails, not only of the County of *Middlesex*, but I might add, from all the other Jails in *England*, which Experience has shewn us the Fatality of.

In

In the Rebellion Year 1745, two Soldiers carried this *Jail Fever* with them, into the Army in *Scotland*, under the Command of his late Royal Highness the Duke of *Cumberland*, by whom; as his Royal Highness was pleased afterwards to declare to the Privy Council; he was near having, at that most critical Juncture, two whole Regiments entirely ruined.

In 17<sup>45</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, a Ship, *Dobbins*, Master, bound to *Virginia*, with about 100 *Newgate* Convicts, was taken in the Bay of *Biscay*, by two *French* Frigates, the *Zephire* and *Sirene*, and carried into *Brest*, where Duke *D'Anville* then lay with his Fleet, bound for *Cebueto*. These Convicts, being Prisoners of War, were there distributed in the *French* Hospitals, where they communicated a contagious Fever to the *French* Sailors, of which many died, and the rest were shipped on board the Duke's Fleet, which was in great Want of Hands. The Consequences of which were, that the Duke lost 2500 Men on his tedious Pas-



sage thither, of the Pestilential Fever contracted from the said *Newgate* Convicts, besides many Thousands more, with his own Life, soon after his landing in that Harbour, which rendered that important Expedition quite abortive, preserved *Louisburg* then in our Possession, threw the *Ardent* and *Mars* Men of War into our Hands, on our disgraceful Return from *L'Orient*, and disabled the *French* from making any Figure at Sea, during the Remainder of that War.

In *February*, 1753, Dr. *John Pringle* gave the Royal Society, an Account, in Article VI, of several Persons seized with the *Jail Fever*, working in *Newgate*, and of the Manner in which the Infection was communicated to one intire Family. As may be seen in the *Philosophical Transactions*, Vol. 48, Part I, Page 42. Printed for *Davis*, over against *Gray's-inn Gate*, *Holborn*.

This Account shews, that out of eleven Workmen, employed in *Newgate* by  
Mr.

Mr. *Stibbs*, in setting up Dr. *Hales's* Ventilator, seven of them were seized with the *Jail Fever*, whereof one died, and by its being communicated to others, one of those died likewise: A plain Demonstration of the contagious Nature of this Distemper.

This Account of Dr. *Pringle's* will also serve to shew, what Caution ought to be observed in pulling down this infected Jail, or in removing or transplanting the Materials belonging to it, into other Places. For Dr. *Hales*, has told us, the very Walls are impregnated with that poisonous Matter, and that it is of so subtile a Nature, as to penetrate into the very Heart of the hardest Oak. — And Dr. *Pringle* himself proves to us, in the above Account refer'd to, that it was the Putrid Matter, lodged in the old Air Trunks, which gave the *Jail Fever* to the seven Workmen out of the eleven. And I can take upon myself to say, that in the fatal *Carthagera* Expedition of 1741, the infectious Matter  
(arising

arising from the same Disorder as we call the *Jail Fever*) was of so corroding a Nature, that it eat into the very Decks and other Timbers of all our Transport Ships.

And if I didn't think it too tedious, I could give a pretty late Instance, at *Southampton*, where a putrid Matter had been lodged for seven or eight Years, which afterwards infected some Hundreds of Persons, out of which Number nearly one Half were carried off.

In *March*, 1764, seven *Newgate* Convicts were all buried together, in *Greenwich* Burying Ground, whose infected Bodies had been cast overboard out of a Transport Ship, and were taken up on that Shore, after having lain there for some Days.

*Annapolos* in *Maryland*, *July* 29, 1767.  
The deplorable Havock lately made in the Family of a Widow Lady on the Eastern Shore, by that horrid contagious  
Distemper,



Distemper, commonly called the Jail Fever, ought to give fresh Warning to the Inhabitants of this Province how they admit this baneful Malady into their Families. A casual Visit, it seems, from one of the Felons, some Time since imported in a convict Ship, communicated the Distemper to the Negroes. It is confidently reported, that near thirty People in this Family (among whom the worthy Lady herself was one) fell Victims to the Fury of this malignant ravaging Pestilence. The Case of Mr. *Howard*, near *Annapolis*, who lost his own Life, and many of his Family, is a recent and notorious Instance of the Malignity of this Distemper. Moved by a tender Concern for the Inhabitants, who have too often felt the direful Effects of this wide wasting Contagion, our Assembly, at their last Meeting, enacted a Quarantine Law, which will probably give some Check to its Introduction, and save the Lives of Thousands.

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